

**Swamp Creek Diversion  
Improvement Project  
Environmental Assessment Decision Notice**

**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Region Three, Bozeman  
September 2009**

**Proposed Action**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is proposing to provide funding and implement a project to improve an irrigation diversion on Swamp Creek, a tributary to the Big Hole River. The intent of this project is to improve the infrastructure that will allow better control and management of the irrigation system and improve fish passage. Specifically, the project will remove a pin and plank diversion and replace it with a rock grade control, install a headgate and measuring device, and regrade the irrigation ditch. The intent of this project is to provide the water users the ability to improve irrigation management which will allow for instream flow conservation in Swamp Creek, ultimately benefiting Arctic grayling and other native and sport fish species.

The project site is located on property owned by John Nelson (T2S, R15W, Section 20). The project is located approximately 3 miles west of the community of Wisdom in Beaverhead County

**Montana Environmental Policy Act**

FWP is required by the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) to assess significant potential impacts of a proposed action to the human and physical environment. In compliance with MEPA, an Environmental Assessment (EA) was completed for the proposed project by FWP and released for public comment on August 21, 2009.

Public comments on the proposed action were taken for 14 days (through September 4, 2009). The EA was mailed to 40 individuals and groups, and legal notices were printed in the *Montana Standard* (Butte, MT) and the *Dillon Tribune*. The EA was also posted on the FWP webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov/publicnotices/>.

**Summary of Public Comment**

One public comment was received during the 14-day review period. The comment, received from the Anaconda Sportsmens Club was as follows "...the Anaconda Sportsmens Club is in favor of the improvement project at Swamp Creek."

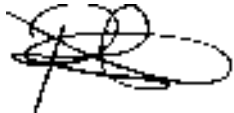
**Final Environmental Assessment**

There are no modifications necessary to the Draft Environmental Assessment based on public comment. The Draft Environmental Assessment, together with this Decision Notice, will serve as the final document for this proposal.

## **Decision**

Based on the Environmental Assessment, public comment, and the need to preserve fluvial Arctic grayling and its habitat in Swamp Creek and the Big Hole River, it is my decision to proceed with the Swamp Creek Diversion Improvement Project that will enhance fish passage and provide the infrastructure to improve instream flow conservation efforts on Swamp Creek, a tributary to the Big Hole River.

I find there to be no significant impacts on the human and physical environments associated with this project. Therefore, I conclude that the Environmental Assessment is the appropriate level of analysis, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick J. Flowers', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

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Patrick J. Flowers  
Region Three Supervisor